

New Problem Play Gay French Farce and Romantic Scotch Comedy Lead Week's Playbills

By JULIA CHANDLER MANE.

During our recent discussion of present-day prices charged for the pleasure of seeing the plays presented in the high-class theaters, a correspondent wanted to know what I had to say about our frequent failure to get the original company, claiming that it is an injustice to us to be asked to pay \$2 for a seat to see a second company when no more is demanded in the metropolis for the original production.

The writer chose "High Jinks" as an example to prove his point, than which no better choice could be made to prove my own contention that we make too much of a fetish of original companies, for the cast which presented the rollicking musical comedy in question at the Belasco so recently was a vast improvement over that which was seen in New York last season. The most gifted member of the former cast was Ada Meade, whom we saw here, as the only member of last year's company. In the case of each of the other principal roles the artists employed to present "High Jinks" on tour better fitted the parts and brought to them more ability than their predecessors.

In which case of what had we to complain?

It does not necessarily follow that a second company is inferior to the original. In many cases the reverse is the case. Take "Peg o' My Heart," which we have twice seen in Washington, with Elsa Ryan in the title role, created in New York by Laurette Taylor. While I did not personally see Miss Taylor in her visualization of Peg, I have talked to a good many folk who did see her, and who have also seen Miss Ryan's interpretation of the role, and in nine out of ten cases the opinion has been that Miss Ryan's performance excels that of Miss Taylor. And certainly we have no quarrel with the excellent supporting company which Mr. Morosco sent here with Miss Ryan last winter.

So again, of what have we to complain?

It would be foolish to deny that there are instances when a personality which makes the larger element of a play's success is not possible of duplication, and that the drama in the hands of a second star is not so enjoyable as in the original. This happens only, however, when the drama itself is of mediocre quality and dependent upon a certain type of man or woman to make it convincing. Ordinarily it is not difficult to find a score or more of actors and actresses who are as capable as those who create the roles of a play in the original, and it is only common sense to suppose that a producer is going to send his New York success to other cities with a company and production that will stand comparison with the original, for the second company is invariably recruited by the critical eye, which is only too ready to note and resent inferiority. For this very reason the public is very sure to be quickly told when a New York manager has been so foolhardy as to make an effort to put on an unworthy presentation of any play on tour, as a consequence of which the theatergoer is assured the protection of foreknowledge if he follows theatrical news and criticism with any degree of regularity.

Washington has less cause for complaint against second companies than almost any other city, for we usually get the New York productions, if not intact at least with but few changes, and those well and wisely made. In addition to this we have the honor to see many premieres in which the very cream of histrionism is utilized, for the companies which open in new plays in this city go into New York with few changes, and consist of players who are expected by the producer to attract substantial audiences in New York for a long run.

Substantiating the above comment comes a new play to the Columbia Theater tomorrow night, engaging the services of a cast of players of no mean ability. The new drama, which will have its first appearance on any stage here this week, is by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford, having the startling title of "Polygamy."

Mr. O'Higgins, who has already collaborated with Miss Ford in two notable successes—"The Dummy" and "The Argyle Case"—is primarily a writer of novels, magazine stories, and more serious books on social questions of the day. He has a deal of Irish humor, a love of humanity, and a firm faith in public conscience. One of his tales helped to settle a railroad strike; another served as a campaign document; a third won \$1,000 as "the best American short story," a fourth became a very popular play, "The Dummy."

Quoting from the New York Sun: "Washington Irving was the first biographer of New York; then came O. Henry; and now there is Harvey O'Higgins, the man who writes Irish stories."

But Mr. O'Higgins is more than the prose laureate of Erie—for he is the man who wrote "The Beast and the Jungle" with Judge Lindsey, and the exposure of Mormon conditions, with former Senator Frank J. Cannon.

Miss Ford, who is co-author with Mr. O'Higgins of "Polygamy," has seven plays to her credit, including "The Dummy," "The Argyle Case," "The Fourth Estate," "A Gentleman of France," "A Little Brother of the Rich," "Audrey," and her first piece, "The Greatest Thing in the World."

Coming from two such serious writers as Miss Ford and Mr. O'Higgins, it seems a safe bet that whatever we may think of the suitability of discussing the problem which is the basic idea of the new play on the stage, the subject will be handled with earnestness and straightforward frankness, and also that the characters will be visualized with understanding and sympathy, for the leading part will be in the hands of Chrystal Herne, whom we last saw here at the Belasco Theater when "At Bay" was given its initial presentation.

Miss Herne is one of the four children of the late James A. Herne, the playwright. One of her earlier successes was achieved in the revival of her father's famous play, "Margaret Fleming," and she has created important roles in a number of big productions.

Playing the leading male role in "Polygamy" will be William Mink, who has been extensively featured in Plink productions, and who established an en-

Hour of Anxiety for Conductor Stransky

At Josef Stransky, the conductor of the Philharmonic orchestra, is a Bohemian, and therefore an Austrian subject. It was feared he might be called on for military duty. But as it happens he is exempt, so there was no difficulty on that score.

He and Mrs. Stransky were at their villa in Berg, a resort in the mountains of Bavaria, near the Lake of Starnberg, where the ill-fated King Ludwig, of Bavaria, Wagner's friend and patron, met his tragic death in 1888. Making their way leisurely and comfortably, Mr. and Mrs. Stransky arrived at Christiania, Norway, the home of Mrs. Stransky, where they remained during the rest of August and part of September. They sailed from Christiania on the 19th of September on the Kristianstad, National Line, and were somewhat nervous dur-

ing the passage through the English Channel, as not only was there danger from mines, but vessels were being held up and their passenger lists searched. But these dangers were passed in safety only to encounter unusual storms in the passage across the open sea. At length the welcome shore line appeared and Sandy Hook loomed up on the horizon. But now occurred the most anxious moment of all. A British cruiser suddenly stopped the Kristianstad just outside the three-mile limit and British officers came on board and demanded the passenger manifests. Visions of indefinite detention or even possible return to the hands of turmoil and slaughter filled the Stranskys with dismay, even with the flag of safety in sight.

Fortunately, it turned out that the officers were looking for a particular man who was finally found in the steerage. But even this man was safe, for during the search the wind and tide had carried the Kristianstad within the three-mile neutrality limit. The British officers returned to their vessel, and the Stranskys breathed sighs of relief, and in a few hours were on American soil. Conductor Stransky ready and eager for his season's work with the Philharmonic Orchestra.

A Varied Experience.

Rosalind Ivan, who is playing an important role in the new O'Higgins-Ford play, "Polygamy," that is coming to the Columbia Theater this week, has been the exponent of the ultra-modern drama in some of the most interesting plays of the day, in Europe, after a good Shakespearean foundation with Sir George Alexander and Sir Henry Irving.

"I've had a varied stage experience," said Miss Ivan. "I spent my novitiate with Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, coming with them on this last visit together to America. Such roles as 'Nerissa' in 'The Merchant of Venice,' and other second leads fell to my lot. Later I revisited this country with Olga Nethersole and took that actress' place in 'Sapho,' when she was ill on one occasion, in Philadelphia.

"I played Canada in Bernard Shaw's play of that name, and in Arnold Bennett's 'Cupid and Commensense,' with Miss Horniman's Manchester Players, at the Gaiety Theater in Manchester, England. In Germany I played with Meta Illing's company, in the name part of John Massfield's play, 'The Tragedy of Hamlet,' and it was then that I was invited to become a permanent member of the Royal Playhouse in Berlin. I also played under two Russian managements, in London in Princess Baraninsky's company, and at another time, in America, in Mme. Nazimova's company.

"I have played in the widest range of plays, from Shaw, Bennett, Massfield, Strindberg, Percy Mackaye, the ultra-modern drama, you see, and I have the keenest interest in the development of the theater, in all its phases."

Fannie Ward on Stage Types.

Much is being said in the theatrical world today of "stage types." This producing manager demands types for dramatic parts and that stage director ex-

acts types for the musical or operatic roles. Many a capable actor loses employment because of facially, physically or temperamentally and mannerisms he or she does not impress the manager as being "the type for the part."

There is one American star at least who takes very little stock in types. This is Fannie Ward, the comedienne who is to be seen here in the French farce comedy, "Madam President" at the National Theater this week.

"In my estimation," says Miss Ward, "this thing of types not only is a fallacy, but as you please, but it is the encouragement of a great injustice to the actor. By this, I mean it identified him or her with a certain line of parts and creates the belief that he or she is unfitted to play any other kind of characters. Thus the actor is driven into a rut, so to speak, and if plays are produced in which their 'types' are missing, these actors thoroughly capable and conscientious, will find themselves out of work."

"Really this typing of casts seems to me a commentary on the actor of today; it is tantamount to asserting that versatility is on the wane among the representatives of our profession. And it is a well known fact that versatility is one of the actor's chiefest stocks in trade. Compare the actors of yesterday with those of today. Then they did not only play types and demand them. In the old days of stock stars of which we read, actors were called upon to play six or eight different parts in a week and scores of plays in a season. The stage had many illustrious representatives in those days, but no better actors than we have today. They did not harp on this subject of types. Why should we?"

"I should like to have some one tell me to just what line or class of types Gobette, the part I play in 'Madam President,' belongs. I fear they would have some trouble in classifying her."

Small Talk of the Stage

Four comic opera composers are said to be fighting—Franz Lehár, Leo Fall, Jean Gilbert, and Oscar Strauss.

Frank V. Bruner is in the city arranging for the coming of Charles Frohman's production of "The Beautiful Adventure."

R. Eden Payne will make an American production of "Joy," by John Galsworthy, in Philadelphia later in the season.

Cumstock and Gert will soon present "The Story of the Rosary," Walter Howard's romantic melodrama of modern war, at the Belasco Theater in this city. The entire cast and production are direct from the Prince's Theater, London.

Louise Randolph is having a hard time trying to convince the playgoers of the West that she is not playing the lower-priced houses. She has been widely advertised as appearing in divers sensational plays, when, as a matter of fact, she is now in New York, where she appeared last week at the Cort Theater in a new play called "The Spur."

E. S. Willard, the distinguished English actor, has consented to come to this country in December for a brief tour.

Tomorrow evening at William A. Brady's Playhouse, New York, "My Lady's Dress" will reach the fifth week of its New York season.

R. Henderson Bland, who became known to the amusement public in this country through his reverential portrayal of the "Christ" in the film drama, "From the Manger to the Cross," has been engaged by William Elliott to play the part of "Lord Inglehart" in his production of "Kitty Mackay," which is to be the attraction at the Belasco Theater this week.

In "Fifty Miles from Boston" at Poli's this week Carl Brickert will play the role created in the original New York production by Donald Brian, but played on tour by the author himself, George M. Cohan.

Roy L. McCordell won the prize of \$1,000 in the comedy scenario contest of the New York Sunday Telegraph-Charter Theaters Corporation. "In the comedy, 'A Jay in Peacock Alley,' Mr. McCordell," says the Telegraph, "has surpassed any of his former efforts and has brought into being a play so irresistibly funny that it will add greatly to his established reputation as one of the few real American humorists."

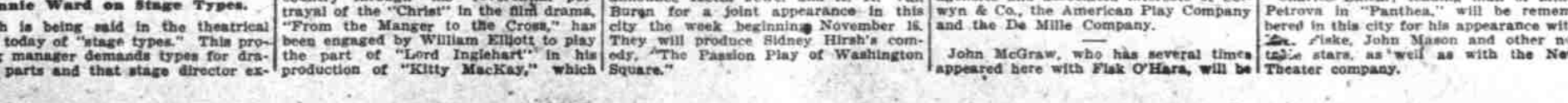
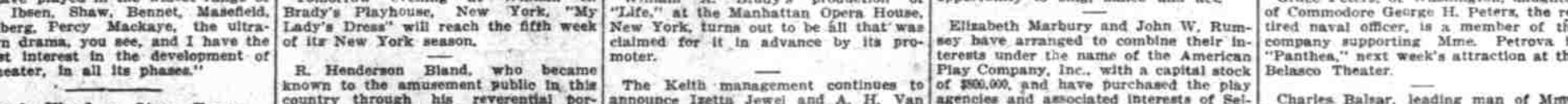
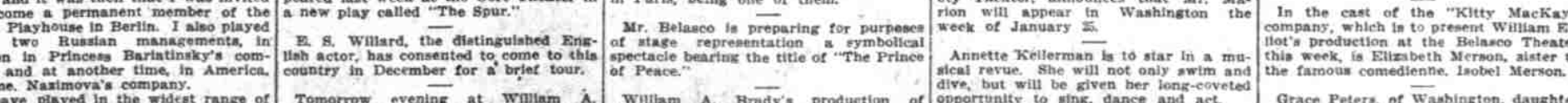
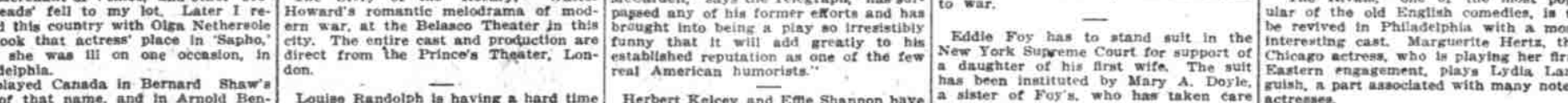
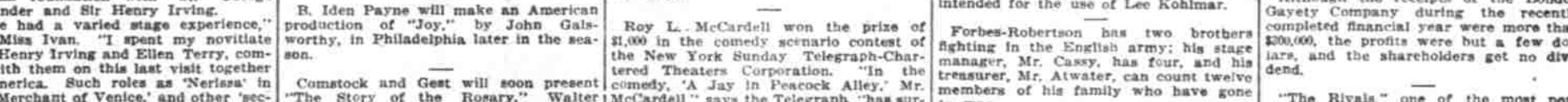
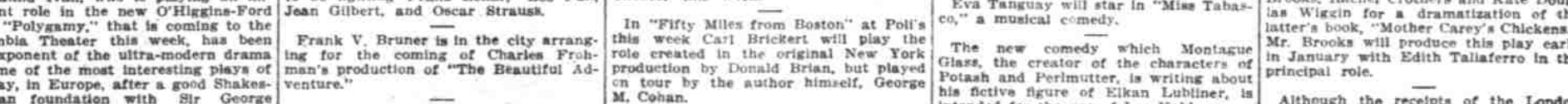
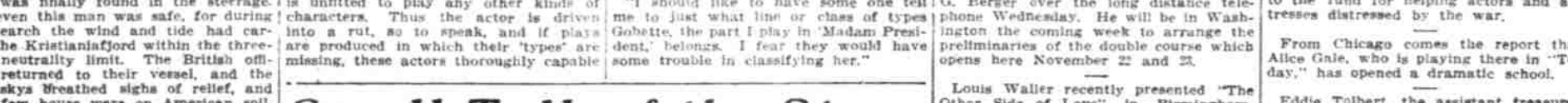
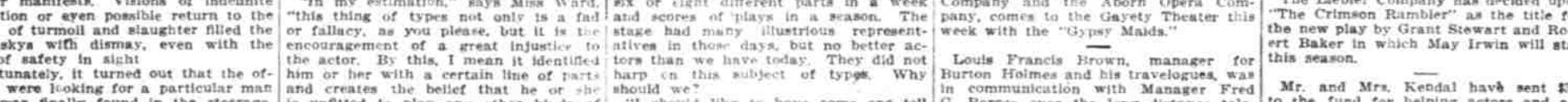
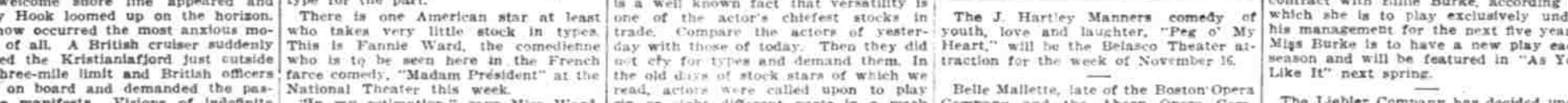
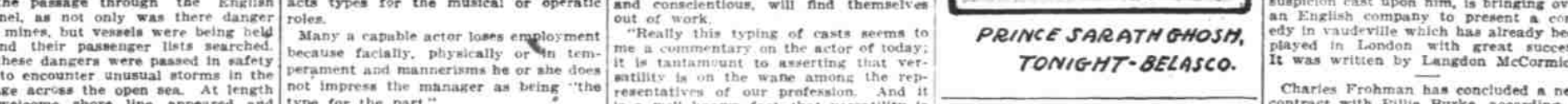
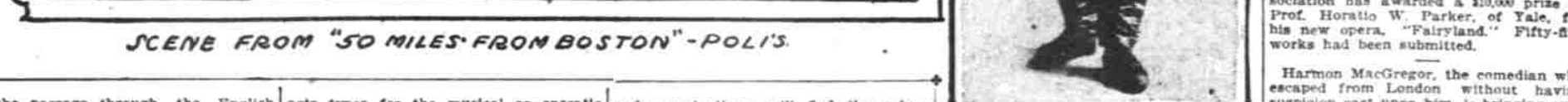
Herbert Keiley and Effie Shannon have been selected by Winthrop Ames to play the leading parts in Alice Brown's prize play, "Salt of the Earth."

Many theaters in Europe have been turned into hospitals, the Opera Comique, in Paris, being one of them.

Mr. Belasco is preparing for purposes of stage representation a symbolic spectacle bearing the title of "The Prince of Peace."

William A. Brady's production of "Life," at the Manhattan Opera House, New York, turns out to be full of claims for it in advance by its promoter.

The Keith management continues to announce Izettu Jewell and A. H. Van Buren for a joint appearance in this city the week beginning November 15. They will produce Sidney Hill's comedy, "The Passion Play of Washington Square."



seen at the Belasco this week in "Kitty Mackay."

Mme. Petrova, who comes to the Belasco Theater in "Panthea," appeared at Keith's Theater last spring in a novelty vaudeville act.

As the chief village gossip in "Fifty Miles from Boston" at Poli's this week Louise Kent will have the biggest opportunity she has had for months. One of the best song numbers of the whole production falls to her. It is "Ain't It Awful," sung originally by Emma Janvier.

"The Dummy," that successful production which has been running all summer at the Hudson Theater in New York, will be one of the November attractions at the Columbia Theater.

Virginia Brooks, daughter of Joseph Brooks, who has been studying music in Europe for the last four years, will make her American debut shortly in a light opera which is being written for her.

William H. Crane is to appear in a picture of "David Harum."

"Florodora" is to be revived in London.

Sir Herbert Tree has decided that his next production at His Majesty's, London, shall be "Henry IV." (Part I.)

The Los Angeles Music Teachers' Association has awarded a \$2,000 prize to Prof. Horatio W. Parker, of Yale, for his new opera, "Fairyland." Fifty-five works had been submitted.

Harmon MacGregor, the comedian who escaped from London without having suspicion cast upon him, is bringing over an English company to present a comedy in vaudeville which has already been played in London with great success. It was written by Langdon McCormick.

Charles Frohman has concluded a new contract with Ethel Burke, according to which she is to play exclusively under his management for the next five years. Miss Burke is to have a new play each season and will be featured in "As You Like It" next spring.

The Liebler Company has decided upon "The Crimson Rumbler" as the title for the new play by Grant Stewart and Robert Baker in which May Irwin will star this season.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal have sent \$300 to the fund for helping actors and actresses distressed by the war.

From Chicago comes the report that Alice Gale, who is playing there in "Today," has opened a dramatic school.

Eddie Tolbert, the assistant treasurer at the Columbia Theater, is endeavoring to turn the baseball field into a football team to meet the requirements of seasonable sport.

A contract has been signed by Joseph Brooks, Rachel Crothers and Kate Douglas Wiggin for a dramatization of the latter's book, "Mother Carey's Chickens." Mr. Brooks will produce this play early in January with Edith Taliaferro in the principal role.

Although the receipts of the London Gaiety Company during the recently completed financial year were more than \$200,000, the profits were but a few dollars, and the shareholders got no dividend.

"The Rivals," one of the most popular of the old English comedies, is to be revived in Philadelphia with a most interesting cast. Marguerite Heriz, the Chicago actress, who is playing her first Eastern engagement, plays Lydia, Langgish, a part associated with many noted actresses.

"Aristocracy," one of the most famous of American dramas, has been "filmed" by the Famous Players Film Company with Tyrone Power and Marguerite Skirvin in the chief roles.

In the cast of the "Kitty Mackay" company, which is to present William Elliott's production at the Belasco Theater this week, is Elizabeth Merson, sister to the famous comedienne, Isabel Merson.

Grace Peters, of Washington, daughter of Commodore George H. Peters, the retired naval officer, is a member of the company supporting Mme. Petrova in "Panthea," next week's attraction at the Belasco Theater.

Charles Balsar, leading man of Mme. Petrova in "Panthea," will be remembered in this city for his appearance with the stars, John Mason and other notable stars, as well as with the New Theater company.

John McGraw, who has several times appeared here with Flak O'Hara, will be